

Claims

1. A method for protecting a military or paramilitary firefighter or emergency worker, wherein the method comprises providing the military or paramilitary firefighter or emergency worker with a protective garment having an outer shell, which has two expansive surfaces comprised of a surface of high visibility and a surface of low visibility, the outer shell being reversible so that, when the protective garment is worn, one said surface becomes an outer surface of the outer shell and the other surface becomes an inner surface of the outer shell, the outer shell having portions that are reflective, fluorescent, or both on the surface of high visibility but not on the surface of low visibility, the protective garment having an inner liner, which is attachable detachably to the outer shell so as to be wearable within whichever of the expansive surfaces becomes the inner surface of the outer shell.

whereby if a tactical situation, in which a need for low visibility overrides a need for high visibility, develops or is expected to develop, the military or paramilitary firefighter or emergency worker wearing the protective garment with the shell of high visibility facing outwardly may have an opportunity to doff the protective garment, to detach the inner liner, to reverse the outer shell, to re-attach the inner liner, and to re-don the protective garment with the surface of low visibility facing outwardly.

2. The method of claim 1 wherein those portions may be provided by reflective trim affixed to the shell, on the surface of high visibility.

3. The method of claim 1 wherein, when facing outwardly, the surface of low visibility appears dark in ambient light.

4. The method of claim 1 wherein, when facing outwardly, the surface of low visibility appears black in ambient light.

5. The method of claim 1 wherein, when facing outwardly, the surface of low visibility displays camouflage.

5 6. The method of claim 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 wherein the outer shell conforms to National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standards for outer shells of protective garments for firefighters.

7. A method for protecting a military or paramilitary firefighter or emergency worker, wherein the method is practiced by the military or paramilitary firefighter or emergency worker and comprises wearing a protective garment having an outer shell, which has two expansive surfaces comprised of a surface of high visibility and a surface of low visibility, the outer shell being reversible so that, when the protective garment is worn, one said surface becomes an outer surface of the outer shell and the other surface becomes an inner surface of the outer shell, the outer shell having portions that are reflective, fluorescent, or both on the surface of high visibility but not on the surface of low visibility, the protective garment having an inner liner, which is attachable detachably to the outer shell so as to be wearable within whichever of the expansive surfaces becomes the inner surface of the outer shell.

20 whereby if a tactical situation, in which a need for low visibility overrides a need for high visibility, develops or is expected to develop, the military or paramilitary firefighter or emergency worker wearing the protective garment with the shell of high visibility facing outwardly may have an opportunity to doff the protective garment, to detach the inner liner, to reverse the outer shell, to re-attach

the inner liner, and to re-don the protective garment with the surface of low visibility facing outwardly.

8. The method of claim 7 wherein those portions may be provided by reflective trim affixed to the shell, on the surface of high visibility.

5 9. The method of claim 7 wherein, when facing outwardly, the surface of low visibility appears dark in ambient light.

10. The method of claim 7 wherein, when facing outwardly, the surface of low visibility appears black in ambient light.

10 11. The method of claim 7 wherein, when facing outwardly, the surface of low visibility displays camouflage.

12. The method of claim 7, 8, 9, 10, or 11 wherein the outer shell conforms to National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standards for outer shells of protective garments for firefighters.